

J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

House Meets at 9:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

**H.R. 2084—FY 2000 Transportation Appropriations Act
(Conference Report)**

**H.R. 1906—FY 2000 Agriculture Appropriations Act (Conference Report)
Motion to Go to Conference on H.R. 2466 (FY 2000 Interior
Appropriations Act)**



H.R. 2084—FY 2000 Transportation Appropriations Act (Conference Report)

Floor Situation: The House will consider the conference report to H.R. 2084 as its first order of business today. Conference reports are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed; they are debatable for one hour, may not be amended, and are subject to one motion to recommit. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted a rule that waives all points of order against the conference report and its consideration.

Summary: The conference report to H.R. 2084 appropriates \$13.2 billion in new budget authority for transportation programs in FY 2000, \$6 billion more than the House-passed bill (\$5.9 billion for FAA operations was removed from the House measure on a point of order during consideration of the bill), \$228 million more than the FY 1999 level (which included \$848 million in supplemental emergency spending), and \$270 million less than the president's request. In total, the conference agreement provides approximately \$50.2 billion in total obligational authority (i.e., new budget authority, guaranteed obligations under TEA-21, limitations on obligations, and exempt obligations), \$5.7 billion more than the House-passed bill, \$3 billion more than the FY 1999 level, and \$16 million more than the president's request.

Specifically, the measure allocates (1) \$28.9 billion for the Federal Highway Administration—a \$1.6 billion increase over FY 1999; (2) \$10.1 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration (a \$489 million increase over last year), including \$5.9 billion for operations and \$2.1 billion for facilities and equipment (a \$338 million increase and \$175 million increase, respectively); (3) \$5.8 billion for the Federal Transit Administration, \$407 million more than last year; (4) \$735 million for the Federal Railroad Administration,

a \$42 million decrease from the FY 1999 level; and (5) \$4 billion for the U.S. Coast Guard, a \$128 million increase.

A major change brought about by the passage of the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21; *P.L. 105-178*) was the creation of “firewalls” that guarantee appropriations for highway and transit programs at certain minimum levels. Guaranteed within the new “firewalls” is total highway spending of \$28.1 billion, \$2.2 billion more than FY 1999, and total transit spending of \$5.8 billion, \$824 million more than last year.

Other major allocations include:

- * \$1.95 billion for the Airport Improvement Program, \$300 million less than the House-passed bill and equal to the FY 1999 level;
- * \$70.5 million for motor carrier safety operations (\$9.3 million more than the president’s request) and \$105 million for motor carrier safety grants (\$5 million more than last year); and
- * \$571 million for Amtrak, approximately equal to the House-passed bill and \$38.3 million less than last year. The bill also provides the agency with additional flexibility in allocating its funds on critical short- and long-term capital needs.

Finally, the conference report (1) prohibits funds in the bill from being used to carry out the functions and operations of the Office of Motor Carriers & Highway Safety, unless the office is transferred from the Federal Highway Administration; (2) repeals section 656 of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (*P.L. 104-208*), which required the Transportation Department to establish federal standards for birth certificates and drivers’ licenses; (3) prohibits funding to carry out regulations to increase slot allocations for any international air carriers at O’Hare airport; and (4) prohibits funds from being used to prepare, prescribe, or promulgate corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) standards for automobiles that differ from those already promulgated.

The House passed H.R. 2084 by a vote of 429-3 on June 23, 1999. The Senate passed its version by a vote of 95-0 on September 16, 1999.

Views: The Republican leadership supports passage of the conference report. An official Clinton Administration viewpoint was unavailable at press time.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, Week #27, Pt. V, September 30, 1999; and #17, Pt. II, June 14, 1999.



H.R. 1906—FY 2000 Agriculture Appropriations Act (Conference Report)

Floor Situation: The House will consider the conference report to H.R. 1906 after it completes consideration of the conference report to H.R. 2084. Conference reports are privileged and may be considered

any time three days after they are filed; they are debatable for one hour and may not be amended. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted a rule waiving all points of order against the conference report and its consideration.

Summary: The conference report to H.R. 1906 appropriates \$69 billion For FY 2000 for agriculture, rural development, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and related agencies, \$7.9 billion more than the FY 1999 level—which included \$5.9 billion in emergency spending from the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, *P.L. 105-277*—\$8.3 billion more than the House-passed version, and \$2.1 billion more than the president’s request. The conference report includes \$8.7 billion in FY 2000 emergency funding to assist farmers who have endured economic losses and natural disasters. After scorekeeping adjustments, the total appropriation includes nearly \$14 billion in discretionary budget authority for agriculture programs, \$296 million more than the FY 1999 level and \$106 million more than the House-passed version of the bill. The conference report also contains \$46.6 billion in mandatory spending, \$5.6 billion more than the FY 1999 level and \$505.7 million less than the House-passed level.

Specifically, the bill appropriates:

- * \$20.1 billion for agriculture programs (\$5.6 billion more than the FY 1999 level and \$104.9 million more than the House-passed measure);
- * \$813.3 million for conservation programs (\$20.3 million more than the FY 1999 level and \$13.3 million more than the House-passed bill);
- * \$2.2 billion for rural economic and community development programs (\$37.9 million more than the FY 1999 level and \$76.6 million more than the House measure);
- * \$35 billion for domestic food programs (\$227.1 million more than the FY 1999 level and \$486.4 million less than the House-passed measure);
- * \$1.1 billion for foreign assistance programs (\$133 million less than the FY 1999 level and \$93.5 million less than the House level); and
- * \$1.1 billion for the FDA and related agencies (\$68.9 million more than the FY 1999 level and \$34.7 million less than the House measure).

Much of the funding in the conference report goes toward (1) food stamps (\$21.1 billion); (2) child nutrition programs (\$9.6 billion); (3) Farm Assistance Programs (\$1.2 billion); and (4) the supplemental nutrition program for Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC, \$4 billion).

Finally, the conference report contains a new provision to establish a price reporting system for livestock and dairy industries. Specifically, the measure requires the meat packing industry to disclose information on prices paid for produce and profits.

The House passed H.R. 1906 by a vote of 246-183 on June 8, 1999. The Senate approved its version of the measure (S. 1233) by voice vote on August 4.

Views: The Republican leadership supports passage of the conference report. An official Clinton Administration viewpoint was unavailable at press time.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, Week #27, Pt. IV, September 30, 1999; and #15, May 21, 1999.



Motion to Go to Conference on H.R. 2466 (FY 2000 Interior Appropriations Act)

Floor Situation: Mr. Regula or a designee is expected to offer a motion to go to conference on H.R. 2466 sometime today. A motion to instruct may be made immediately after this request and before the chair appoints conferees. Instructions are considered the prerogative of the minority and are debatable for one hour.

Summary: The motion, if agreed to, will establish a House-Senate conference to resolve differences between H.R. 2466, which passed the House by a vote of 377-47 on July 14, 1999, and the Senate version, which passed by a vote of 89-10 on September 23, 1999. Once agreed to, the motion permits the chair to appoint conferees. Details of a possible motion to instruct were unavailable at press time.

Views: The Republican leadership strongly supports the motion to go to conference and opposes any motion to instruct conferees that would weaken the position of House negotiators.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #20, July 9, 1999.



To subscribe to this publication via e-mail, please send an e-mail to LegDigest@mail.house.gov and type "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

Brian Fortune: *Managing Editor*

Kevin Smith: *Senior Legislative Analyst*

Mary Rose Baker, Scott Galupo,
Brendan Shields, & Heather Valentine:
Legislative Analysts

House
REPUBLICAN
Conference

**Legislative
Digest**

<http://hillsource.house.gov/LegislativeDigest>